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ABSTRACT

Written for women on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) who are seeking employment, this booklet is designed to introduce the possibility of taking a non-traditional job (a job traditionally held by men). Chapter 1 discusses the dilemma women heads of households face in finding jobs that will adequately support their families. Chapter 2 outlines the advantages and disadvantages of non-traditional jobs compared to traditional jobs. The third chapter is designed to help the reader define her job skills and interests, especially as they relate to non-traditional jobs. Detailed descriptions of some non-traditional jobs are given in chapter 4. The next chapter describes training options for non-traditional occupations, including the WIN (Work Incentive Program) and CETA (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) programs for which women on AFDC are eligible. Strategies for finding and landing a non-traditional job are presented in the sixth chapter. Chapter 7 covers changes in AFDC, Medicaid, and other benefits when a woman gets a job; ways to arrange for child care; and legal rights on the job. The final chapter is primarily directed toward employment counselors and offers techniques for counseling and placing women in non-traditional jobs. (BM)

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Earning A Breadwinner's Wage

Non-Traditional Jobs for Women on AFDC

CE 026 454

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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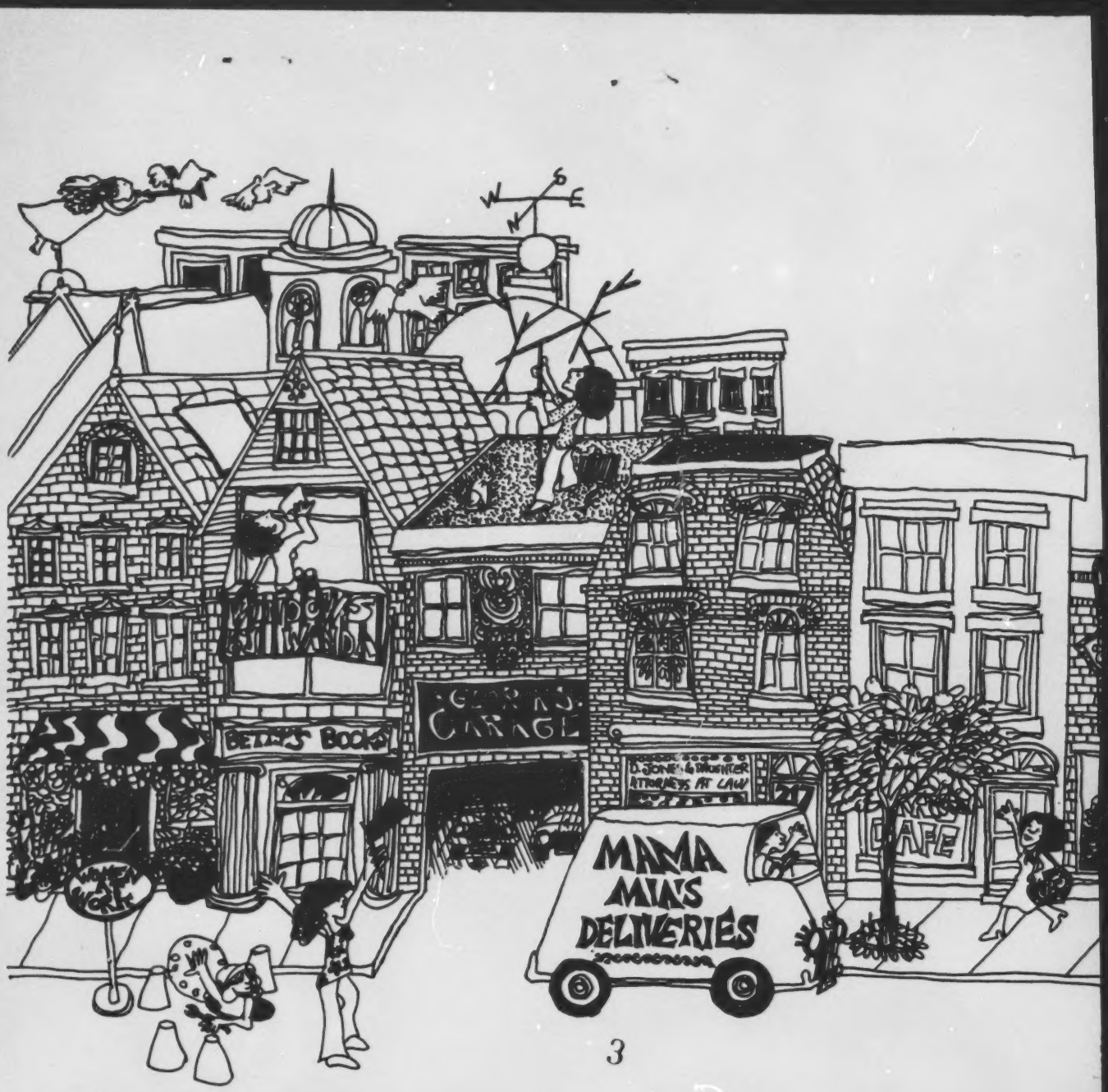
BETTY'S BOOKS
GLORIA'S GARAGE
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MAMA MIA'S DELIVERIES

Women's Enterprises of Boston

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This book grew out of a course taught in the fall of 1977 at Boston State College. The course, *Women, Work and Welfare: Non-Traditional Approaches*, was developed and taught by Sharyn Bahn, Director of Programs at Women's Enterprises, and Betty Mandell, Professor of Sociology at Boston State College. Class members consisted of AFDC recipients, welfare workers, and WIN workers. Both the course and this book were funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Postsecondary Education Commission.

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Introduction

This book has been written for women on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) who are interested in going to work. The purpose of this book is to introduce the possibility of taking a "non-traditional" job, or a job traditionally held by men. Although many jobs can be considered non-traditional (women who are doctors or lawyers are in non-traditional fields), a non-traditional job in this book will usually refer to skilled trade or technical jobs, such as electrician, construction worker, business machine repairer, or computer technician. As discussed in later chapters, these jobs are promising options for women who presently lack job skills or training, and who must support their families. The chapters in this book follow a logical sequence, from the initial decision to consider a non-traditional job to the selection of a specific non-traditional job, options for training, and techniques for getting a job. Although readers are encouraged to read this book from beginning to end, a reader may decide to pick out chapters of interest. Briefly, the chapters cover these topics:

"What's the Problem?" discusses the dilemma women heads of household face in finding jobs that will adequately support their families.

"The Pros and Cons of a Non-Traditional Job" outlines the advantages and disadvantages of non-traditional jobs compared to traditional jobs.

"Choosing a Non-Traditional Job" helps the reader define her job skills and interests, especially as they relate to non-traditional jobs.

"A Look at Some Non-Traditional Jobs," which is best read in conjunction with "Choosing a Non-Traditional Job," identifies non-traditional jobs with the potential for increased openings in the Boston area. This chapter also gives detailed descriptions of some non-traditional jobs.

"Getting Trained" explores training options for non-traditional occupations, including the WIN and CETA programs, for which women on AFDC are eligible.

"Getting a Non-Traditional Job" discusses strategies for finding and landing a non-traditional job.

"Working and Welfare" covers changes in AFDC, Medicaid, and other benefits when a woman gets a job; ways to arrange for child care; and legal rights on their job.

"The Other Side of the Desk: Counseling Women for Non-Traditional Jobs," directed primarily towards employment counselors, offers techniques for counseling and placing women in non-traditional jobs.

Chapter 1
What's the Problem?

"Some people think that people who are on welfare are lazy, and just don't want to work. Statistics show that most welfare recipients are mothers and children. What people do not seem to realize is that a woman who is living alone, and who's trying to raise her children in poverty, is already working hard."

As single parents, many women find themselves in a position they never anticipated. Not only are they responsible for raising a family, but they must also support a family financially. This realization can be frightening, especially since young children are involved. Some women have never planned on working outside the home, and feel they have no marketable job skills. Others may have very little work experience. Without the right education and training, it is very hard to get a good job. Even if a woman has a skill (like typing) and can get a job, she often discovers that her salary is not enough to support a family. Staying on welfare is the only way many women can support themselves and their children.

Women as Heads of Household

More and more, poverty has become a women's issue. Traditionally, women have been homemakers, and men have supported the family. With the dramatic rise in the divorce rate, however, the number of women who are both homemaker *and* breadwinner has skyrocketed. More women are heads of households now than before. In the past eighteen years, the number of families living on poverty-level incomes has decreased by half, but the percentage of poverty-level families headed by women has doubled. This situation is even worse in large cities. In Boston, for instance, six out of ten families living below the poverty level were headed by women (1970 census).

The Earnings Gap between Women and Men

A huge difference exists between the wages earned by women and the wages earned by men. The statistics on wages are very clear. Men earn more than women. White people earn more than people of minority races. White men take home the biggest paychecks, and black women take home the smallest ones. For every dollar earned by men, women earn only fifty-seven cents. This difference in pay is true throughout the United States. Although many working women are single, divorced, separated or widowed, and although many are the sole breadwinners for their families, women who work full-time earn much less than men who work full-time. In Massachusetts, for example, the salaries earned by people placed through WIN (Work Incentive Program) reflect the fact that men get paid more than women. In 1976, men earned an average of $3.65 per hour, and women earned an average of $2.51 per hour. Men earned about $2,000 more per year than women did.

Why Do Men Earn More Than Women?

Most occupations employ a preponderance of women or a preponderance of men. Women work in fields where there are few men (like clerical jobs) and men work in fields where there are few women (like mechanical jobs). Most women work in traditional women's jobs such as secretary, sales clerk, domestic help, and kitchen and restaurant help. As they are growing up, women are tracked into these jobs: schools train them to take these jobs, their families expect them to do these jobs, and they themselves do not consider other possibilities. Similarly, men are tracked into traditional men's jobs such as auto mechanic or electrician. The problem is that traditional women's jobs pay less, provide little on-the-job training, and offer fewer opportunities for promotion compared to traditional men's jobs. As a result, women earn less money than men do, and have less chance of ever getting a better job.

Making a Decent Living: Non-Traditional Jobs for Women

The lack of high-paying job options affects all women workers, and is especially hard

on women supporting families. A woman who is a single parent needs to earn a breadwinner's wage. A woman can barely support her family on welfare, but she cannot do much better by taking a low-paying traditional woman's job. One way to get out of this problem is to take a job traditionally assigned to men, or a non-traditional job for women. Non-traditional jobs, especially skilled trade and technical jobs such as business machine repairer and construction worker, pay good wages and offer opportunities for training and promotions. For a woman on welfare, taking a non-traditional job can be a way of getting off welfare and earning a high enough wage to support her family. As author Caroline Bird said in *Everything a Woman Needs to Know to Get Paid What She's Worth*, "Money is where the men are."

What it's like to be on welfare

This is about myself and my friends who are welfare recipients because of a divorce or separation, and who have children. Usually a bad marriage and much unhappiness lead someone to this situation. I had always imagined being a happy bride, a mother, and a housewife. My main concerns were my husband and my family. I was very comfortable in this role. But something went wrong. It took a long time for me to realize that I wasn't happy and that the marriage wasn't going to work. All the hopes and plans I had were gone.

The decision to get a divorce took a lot of strength and courage. It was not easy to go through the emotional experience of a divorce and have a little child depending on me when I was not too sure that I could depend on myself. I knew that I would have to begin again, to make all new plans for myself and my child.

I felt lost and confused. Suddenly, there was no more husband, no more home life, no more security. I had to support my child, so I had to go on welfare. Welfare took the place of my husband, supporting us and giving me a certain amount of security, but I felt really low. Although I was searching for a new life for myself and my child, society gave me a bad name: "Welfare Mother." I had to deal with the stigmas of being a single mother, and being on welfare.

Aside from talking to my friends, many of whom were in the same bad position, nothing much happened in my life. In the morning, I would have a cup of coffee, give the kid breakfast, and then the phone would start. A friend would call in the same predicament as me: grouchy, bored, and lonely, looking for someone to complain to or for someone to talk to. It was a great way to start the day.

In the afternoon, we would have lunch, and maybe go for a walk or go shopping. I had to remember that I couldn't do much shopping because I didn't have the money. It was frustrating to take my son into stores, because if he wanted anything (like any normal child would) I had to refuse. If I said yes, I worried about it. So much for shopping sprees.

Nighttime was just as quiet as the rest of the day. I would give the kid supper, do the dishes, and get the kid into bed. My friends would go out to dinner or to a club, but I didn't have any extra money for a babysitter, or for the right clothes, or for entertainment. What good does it do to go out and enjoy yourself if all you do is worry about the cost? So I stayed home, watched TV, and went to bed.

Sometimes I found this situation unfair and hard to accept. Welfare helps you get started, but it also brings new problems.

Chapter 2
The Pros and Cons of a Non-Traditional Job

"It takes a while to learn how to deal with being the only woman who works with a group of men. Men tell you they will not let you do something for your own good or your own safety, though they know you have done these things on your own before. Why can't they realize that I'm doing a job the same as they are, and leave me alone to do it? When more women hold non-traditional jobs, and men get used to it, this sort of behavior will probably stop."

Taking a non-traditional job is an individual decision. Like traditional jobs, non-traditional jobs have their pros and cons. Because the jobs are non-traditional, however, you are probably less familiar with their advantages and disadvantages. Non-traditional jobs pay different wages, take place in different work environments, and require different clothes and equipment (just to name a few factors). Do the pros outweigh the cons? You can ask yourself this question as you read this chapter.

What are the pros of a non-traditional job?

Non-traditional jobs pay higher wages than traditional women's jobs

The figures speak for themselves. Non-traditional jobs pay better wages than jobs that women have traditionally held. A traditional woman's job such as cashier may start at $110 per week. The starting pay for a non-traditional job such as calibration technician may be $185 per week. Trainees on some non-traditional jobs may start earning the same wages that some traditional jobs pay, but they get higher salaries as they advance in their trade.

Non-traditional jobs also offer better financial security to workers. Workers are more likely to get regular wage increases the longer they stay on the job. For example, a woman being trained as a copying machine repairer may earn $140 per week to start, but she can expect a raise every six to ten months as her skills improve and she gains experience. As an experienced repairer with a good work record behind her, she will be able to earn between $200 and $300 per week. Even as a trainee, she can predict what she will be earning from six months to two years. She can make decisions about major expenses, such as buying a car, sending her children to school, or buying a house.

In addition, women in jobs covered by union contracts, such as construction jobs, frequently get yearly cost-of-living increases (automatic raises based on nationwide price increases for food, clothing, and housing).

Non-traditional jobs offer good benefits

Besides high weekly wages, many non-traditional jobs provide excellent benefits including health insurance, life insurance, pension plans, and paid holidays and sick days. Health insurance may cover the cost of hospitalization, clinic visits, and dental care for a woman and her children. Some employers have health insurance plans which are almost as comprehensive as Medicaid. Life insurance provides protection for dependents in case of the employee's disability or death. Some companies also offer educational benefits: they will pay tuition for work-related training or courses.

These benefits can be worth a good amount of money, up to 15% of the employee's wages. In most cases the employer pays the cost of all benefits, although employees may pay for some of the health insurance costs.

Skilled workers are in demand in many places

Every company wants to have skilled, experienced workers. Once a woman learns a skill and accumulates work experience, finding a job is easier even if she moves from one part of the country to another. For example, once a woman learns the skills needed to repair cars, she can find that type of work in different places where that work is in demand.

Because of the time required to train new workers, companies try to keep their skilled employees. Companies will give employees raises and other benefits to encourage them to stay.

No, Mama, you didn't raise your little girl to fix computers. But Charlie doesn't want another angel right now

Many non-traditional jobs offer on-the-job training

Many people enter non-traditional fields through on-the-job training programs. In on-the-job-training a person is hired as a trainee, and works under the supervision of an experienced worker. On-the-job training lasts from two months to several years, depending on the type of job. A trainee is usually paid about half the salary of an experienced worker, and receives regular raises.

Non-traditional jobs offer excellent opportunities for promotion

One of the most important advantages of non-traditional work compared with traditional work is the opportunity for promotion. A worker can change jobs as she gains skill and experience, and she is paid more as she learns new skills. A worker in an electronics company, for instance, may be trained initially to do very simple tasks, but as she acquires more skill and experience, she may be trained to handle new and more challenging jobs. Skilled workers can change jobs within a company, and may become supervisors in one of the company's departments.

A worker may get a sense of accomplishment from making or fixing something

In many non-traditional jobs, the worker can actually see the results of her labor, and can take pride in the finished work. Carpenters complete wooden forms; welders create metal structures; mechanics turn broken machines into working ones. In comparison, many traditional jobs involve serving an unending stream of people or typing other people's letters.

A worker can have day-to-day variety in a non-traditional job

Many non-traditional jobs offer the freedom to move around during the day, and the opportunity to work independently with very little supervision. A typewriter repairer, for example, is dispatched from one office to another (sometimes in a company car) as calls come in. She works at the client's office, and when she has finished the job, calls her supervisor to get another assignment. She is inside during part of the day, and outside between calls. She meets new people at each assignment, and represents her company in her dealings with customers.

Other jobs, like maintenance electrician, computer technician, and air-conditioning mechanic, also involve some mobility during the day, if only inside one large building. A factory mechanic, for example, does regular equipment maintenance and emergency repair work throughout the building.

Not all non-traditional jobs involve moving around. Many occupations, like drafting, involve sitting most of the day. The advantage of non-traditional jobs compared to traditional jobs is the possibility of choosing the level of activity that one enjoys most from a wider range of jobs.

More and more companies are interested in hiring women for non-traditional jobs

The picture for women entering non-traditional fields is looking up. Many corporations have affirmative action plans, and a commitment to hiring and training women and minorities. Companies which have contracts to do work for the federal government are monitored on their affirmative action plans. These companies are especially likely to recruit women in non-traditional occupations.

A worker has more choice about what she wears to work

Unlike most traditional women's jobs where appearance is often important, a non-traditional job may put little stress on appearance or clothing. Different jobs

We couldn't possibly let you get your hands dirty repairing cars for $12 an hour, but you *may* mop up for $2.65.

have different requirements. Mechanics, truckdrivers, and factory workers wear either a uniform or work clothes. Service technicians and business machine repairers, who work in clients' offices, need to look neat and well-dressed. With non-traditional jobs, a worker has more choices from which to find a job that fits her preferences.

Now that you have read the pros, what are the cons of a non-traditional job?

Non-traditional jobs can be hazardous
Many non-traditional jobs involve working with power hand tools or electrical machines, or working in a hard hat area. Workers have to be careful, since there is a greater chance of accidents.

Non-traditional jobs may involve difficult working conditions
Depending on the job, a worker may need to become accustomed to unpleasant working conditions. In some occupations she works outside, in extreme temperatures and weather conditions. Other jobs involve working at heights, or in noisy, smelly or dirty places. Sometimes a worker may perform her tasks in awkward cramped positions.

Co-workers may hassle a woman in a non-traditional job
With only a few women on the job—or perhaps only one woman on the job—male co-workers may feel uncomfortable, especially in the beginning. Some men feel threatened by seeing a woman in a traditional man's job, and they may react by being patronizing, sarcastic, or hostile. The woman herself may feel isolated from her co-workers.

Friends and family may not support a woman's choice of a non-traditional job
A woman may face doubts or resistance from her friends and family when she talks about taking a non-traditional job. Many well-intentioned people have never known a woman in a non-traditional job. They may feel a woman is odd to want such a job, or that she will become less feminine by taking this kind of job. These attitudes can be especially discouraging and frustrating, since the opinions of friends and family can be important.
These are the pros and cons of a non-traditional job. Do the pros outweigh the cons for you? If so, then read on!

Chapter 3

Choosing a Non-Traditional Job

"I work as a carpenter with another woman. When I decided to go into carpentry, my family did not like it at all. My mother didn't want me to become a carpenter, partly because she thought the work was too dangerous. There are dangers—both hand tools and power tools have to be used very carefully. We are very careful, and have never had any accidents. I don't think that we ever will. Despite the dangers and frustrations involved in such detailed work, I am very happy as a carpenter. I am not just doing something that has aesthetic value, but I am making something that is useful, something that people need. It is very rewarding to build a thing and then see it finished."

"What job is right for me?" This is not an easy question for a woman facing the traditional options, so it is not surprising that sorting out non-traditional choices is more difficult. As you grew up, you saw women working as waitresses, secretaries, teachers, and assemblers. You have a good idea of what these jobs are. But because you were raised with the assumption that "girls don't do that kind of work," and you never saw women in non-traditional jobs, you probably have a much fuzzier view of what an electrician, operating engineer, or welder does.

The way to select a career is the same, however, whether you are a woman or a man, or whether you are entering a traditional or non-traditional field. Remember, there is no single "right" answer for you, since you could perform many jobs well. What is important is to find a job which you enjoy doing and which suits your values and needs. Below are some issues to consider as you explore non-traditional fields.

Listing Your Skills

First, make a list of all your skills. You want to look for a job that will use the skills you like most and that will draw on as many of your skills as possible. Examine your homemaker and work experiences for skills which are transferable to non-traditional jobs. (On the questions below, check or fill in the items that apply.)

1. What tasks do you perform in managing a home and family?

____ organize, schedule, and coordinate activities?
____ budget?
____ cook, follow recipe directions, coordinate timing?
____ clean, lift furniture, use equipment?
____ settle family disputes?
____ paint, hang wallpaper?
____ repair broken furniture or appliances?

2. What tasks have you done in past jobs, and what abilities have you shown?

____ coordinate eye and hand movements?
____ do work requiring manual dexterity (agility and control of your hands and fingers)?
____ lift, hoist, or carry?
____ give directions?
____ perform arithmetic computations?
____ operate equipment?
____ deal with customer complaints?
____ work in a team?
____ work independently?
____ repair equipment?
____ perform repetitious work?

3. What volunteer work have you done in community or church groups?

____ organize people?
____ plan projects?

4. What hobbies do you have?

____ sewing?
____ painting, papering?
____ crocheting, knitting?
____ photography?
____ sports?
____ refinishing furniture?

5. What courses have you taken recently?

_____

6. What extracurricular activities did you do in school?

_____

Many of the skills you have listed probably are transferable directly to non-traditional jobs. For example, if you sew,

- you can read and follow directions;
- you have good form and spatial perceptions;
- you have the ability to read a pattern;
- you have manual and finger dexterity;

you can set up and troubleshoot a machine.

You would use these same skills if you were a business machine repairer, carpenter, or machinist.

Deciding on Your Job Values

What is important to you about a job? Everyone values different aspects of a job. Knowing your personal priorities can help you weigh and rank the career options available. For example, if working conditions are most important to you, a job on the Alaskan pipeline is probably out of the question. But if pay is number one for you, it might be a different story!

To help find out what you value most, rank the following five items in order of importance to you.

____ security
____ pay
____ advancement
____ working conditions
____ interesting job

You should also consider these aspects of working (write in your answers below:)

Do you prefer to work inside or outside? _____

Do you prefer seasonal or year-round work? _____

How do you feel about working in extreme heat or cold? _____

Do you prefer to work alone or as a member of a team? _____

Would you rather work standing or sitting in one place or moving around all day? _____

Do you prefer to do the same task all the time or to have varied tasks? _____

How do you feel about shiftwork or overtime work? _____

Would you mind working in a noisy, cramped, or dirty environment? _____

Are you afraid of heights? _____

Is a prestigious job important to you? ____

Would you mind physically demanding work? _____

How do you feel about developing muscles, or getting dirty or cut? _____

For a more in-depth examination of your job values, you can fill out the Job Clarification Guide in the chapter, "The Other Side of the Desk: Counseling Women for Non-Traditional Jobs."

Measuring Your Aptitude

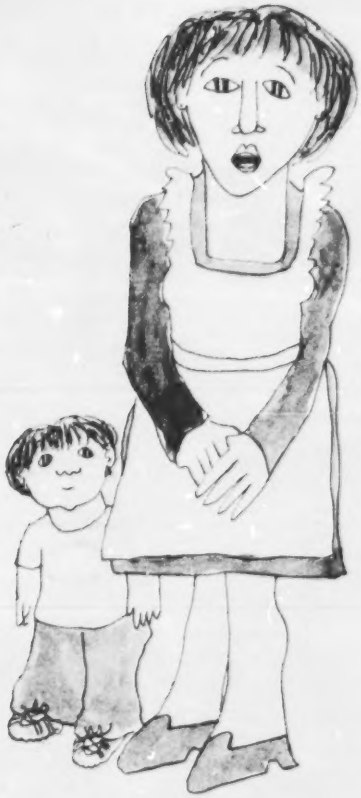
You can take the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) to find out what your natural ability, or aptitude, may be for a variety of fields. The test is usually given free by the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security (DES) or WIN office. This test will not tell you what you will be happy doing, or even what you are necessarily interested in, but it will indicate areas of strength, such as manual dexterity. After you have taken the test, you are entitled to a session with the testgiver to interpret the results and to discuss fields where your aptitude appears strong.

Looking over Training Possibilities

If you are interested in a field that requires training, you will have to look into programs available through CETA, WIN, or other sources such as federal education grants (see the chapter, "Getting Trained"). If you cannot locate training you may have to select another field where training is available.

Looking at the Local Labor Market

This is a critical, often overlooked question in selecting a career. Find out which fields in Greater Boston are in demand, which are growing, and which are declining. For example, training is available for small appliance repair, but even if you are at the top of your training class there is no guarantee that you will get a job. Pick an occupation where there is rea-



I've never worked. I just cook, clean, bus the kids, iron, sew a few clothes, handle the budget, fix the toaster when it smokes, grow a few plants, put up some wallpaper, paint a few walls, fix the plumbing, rewire the lamps . . . who would hire me?

sonable local demand, so that you will not be disappointed once you complete training. To get an idea of the present local labor market, look through the Sunday and daily job ads in a newspaper with many ads, such as the *Boston Globe*. Then look at some publications to find out which industries are likely to grow in the next five years. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (available in the public library) provides basic information on every occupation, including national employment prospects. For local and New England labor market trends, ask your job counselor, or consult one of the following resources:

Occupational Forecast for the Greater Boston Area 1970-80, 1980-85. A report of the School Committee of the City of Boston prepared by the First National Bank of Boston.)

New England Occupational Projections to 1980, Regional Report Number 75-6. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, JFK Building, Government Center, Boston, MA 02203.)

You should also refer to the chapter, "A Look at Some Non-Traditional Jobs," which lists some non-traditional occupations expected to be in growing demand in Greater Boston for the next several years.

Putting It All Together

You have now gathered a great deal of data to help you consider career options. Look back over your skills (particularly those you enjoy doing most), your aptitudes and job values, possibilities for free training, and labor market trends. What jobs draw on your skills and/or aptitudes, meet your most important job values, offer possibilities for training (if needed), and are in demand locally? Make a list of at least three possible occupations. It is always better to start with several options and then narrow the field.

Now you should investigate the occupations. Refer to the job descriptions in the chapter, "A Look at Some Non-Traditional Jobs." Consult the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* for information on the nature of the work, job duties, tools, work environment, and training requirements. Make a list of the pros and cons of each field. Once you have a picture of what these jobs involve, pick the two which are most appealing to you, keeping in mind the other factors such as skills, job values and so on.

Trying the Job on for Size

Now that you have narrowed the field to a couple of options, try to get some first-hand experience with these jobs before you look for a job or begin training. Do not make your decision solely on the basis of reading or testing. This is a very important decision. You need to imagine yourself doing the work eight hours a day, forty hours a week. If you want to make this field a long-term career, you will have to genuinely like the work, and not just the pay or benefits. Here are some ways to try on jobs for size:

Talk to people who hold these jobs. Ask them what they do each day, what they like about the job, and what they do not like.

Take a mini-course at your local high school or adult education center. Learn how to use the tools and perform some basic operations.

Sit in on one or two related classes at a technical school or training program. See what kind of work is done. Also, examine how you feel about being in a classroom again if you need to enroll in a training program for the job.

Lastly, shadow someone with the job for a work day, and get a feel for what a typical day is like.

Chapter 4

A Look at Some Non-Traditional Jobs

"At first I was frightened by the thought of working mostly with men, but it has been a lot easier than I thought. Although there are some men who object to women entering this job, most of the men I work with have been very accepting. My immediate bosses are great. They have been very supportive, and sensitive to chauvinism and sexist remarks. I wouldn't say that it is easy, but it is not nearly as hard as I expected."

Bus driver, police officer, carpenter, machinist, bricklayer—you have many non-traditional jobs from which to choose. As you learned in the previous chapter, a job should not only match your skills and interests, but also should be in demand in the future. The previous chapter gives some resources for finding out about the local labor market. In addition, the Boston Manpower Administration and other sources list these non-traditional jobs as occupations expected to grow in Boston over the next several years:

- Auto mechanic
- Air conditioning, heating, and refrigeration mechanic
- Business machine repairer
- Carpenter
- Computer technician
- Drafter
- Electrical and electronic technician
- Electrician
- Local truckdriver
- Plumber and pipefitter
- Radio and TV repairer
- Welder and flame cutter

Some of these jobs are described in the rest of this chapter. These job descriptions will tell you about the tasks involved in the job, working conditions, wages, training, and other basic information. Since these descriptions are general, however, you are advised to look more closely into a job you are seriously considering.

Women's Enterprises, located at 739 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116 (266-2243), has information on non-traditional jobs and training. Private companies and unions can also tell you about training and qualifications needed for a job, and the possibility of job openings in the future.

My Name Is Paula

My name is Paula. I am a field service representative at a company which produces and maintains office copying machines. I do repair and maintenance work on customers' machines.

Before I became a field service representative, I was in the service as a policewoman. After I was discharged, I was out of work for a while, and started to look for jobs. I heard about a program that was training women for jobs in electronics, took a basic aptitude test, and was accepted for the course. I chose this field because I knew that it was growing and that there was a great demand for people to work in it.

Although I was really excited about starting the course, I was also afraid and unsure of myself. We learned some mechanical skills, like how to solder wire.

We also learned how to read schematics —the electronic diagrams which explain how the machines work. I liked the people taking the course, and I gained confidence in myself. I was hired shortly after finishing the course, as a trainee.

I like my job. I'm not expected to know everything all at once, and I am my own boss. I'm out on the road all the time and the only time I call in is when I get my assignments.

A typical day starts around 8:30, when I call the dispatcher and get my morning assignments. I go to my first call, analyze what is wrong with the copying machine,

I repair business machines and every day is different: different place, different people, different problems to solve, and the pay gets better and better.

and repair it. I call in when I'm finished, and then take my coffee break. After that, it's one call after another until lunch. At lunch time, I call in and tell them that I'm going to lunch and they give me my next call. During lunch hour I'm free to do whatever I want to do. Sometimes I go shopping, or go downtown, or read. After lunch, I start making calls again.

I enjoy my work very much, mainly because I'm outside a lot. I'm around different kinds of people. Some people are really nice, and some people hassle you a lot. Some people think that a woman can't fix their machines. I just tell them that this is my job, that I do it for eight hours a day, and that I know what I'm doing.

I have learned a great deal since I started working here. Different types of copying machines have different electronics. As you grow in the company, you get to know the machines better. When I first started to work here they didn't expect anything from me. It's just like a baby first learning to walk. I was sent out on calls with an experienced technician, who trained me. People learn at different speeds. The company is aware of this, and does everything possible to make it easier for you to progress. They really do try to help, and don't just instill in your mind that you're there to fix machines. They try to make you feel very comfortable and relaxed. They always say any question that is dumb is a question not asked. I ask a lot of questions.

The pay is very good. When I first started working here, I earned $160 a week. After six months I got a raise to $176. Soon I'll be earning $205 a week. Advancement opportunities in this company are excellent. My work is evaluated periodically by different people, including my supervisor.

Sometimes customers call or write recommending my work, and that goes into my record. The overtime is good, and there is a lot of it.

I hope to become a manager in this company. I'm young. As my supervisor says, "You have the world in front of you and you can become anything you want to." I told him that I want his job. He laughed, but I was serious. I want his job. I don't envy him. I envy the money that he makes!

Business Machine Repairer

What is the job?

A business machine repairer maintains and repairs many of the machines used in offices, like typewriters, copying machines, postage meters, and calculating machines. She inspects the machine and corrects any problems. Most repairs are done in the customer's office, although occasionally machines are taken back to the shop for major repairs.

What are the working conditions and wages?

Business repair is year-round steady work. Most repairers work for manufacturers, dealers, and repair shops, working a forty hour week, with occasional overtime. A repairer does not need to be especially strong, since most of the work is handwork. An experienced repairer earns between $200 and $310 per week. A trainee earns between $150 and $200 per week, with regular pay raises. Repairers who work on electronic machines and copying machines earn the highest wages.

What training and qualifications are needed?

Most repairers learn their trade through on-the-job training. To get a starting job with a company, one should be a high school graduate, and should have some

knowledge of basic electricity, electronics, and mechanics. A trainee works initially on the simpler models of the machines, and repairs more complicated equipment as she becomes more skillful.

How does the future look for this job?

Business machine repair is an excellent field for women in Boston. Many large companies have branch offices in the city or suburbs, and need repairers for the increasing number of business machines in the city.

Construction Worker

What is the job?

Construction jobs fall into three groups: structural workers, mechanical workers, and finishing workers.

Structural workers include: cement masons, carpenters, bricklayers, and construction machinery operators (like bulldozer drivers).

Mechanical workers include: plumbers and pipefitters, electricians, and sheet metal workers.

Finishing workers include: painters, asbestos and insulation workers, roofers, and paperhangers.

The construction industry employs the largest number of skilled craft workers in the country.

What are the working conditions and wages?

Construction workers frequently have to bend, stand for a long time, and work in awkward or cramped positions. A worker often works both inside and outside, in good and bad weather. Hourly wages for skilled construction workers range from $8 to $18 per hour. Apprentices and trainees earn about half the hourly wages of skilled workers, and get regular raises.

Hourly wages are high because construction is not as steady as other jobs. A worker is sometimes laid off between jobs, and she may lose work time during bad weather.

What training and qualifications are needed?

Most of the skilled trades can be learned through on-the-job training or through formal apprenticeship programs. A worker can start out as a trainee under a skilled craft worker, and learn the trade slowly as she progresses from helping with some of the simplest tasks to doing some of the most complicated jobs. Although high school graduates are preferred for some trades, many construction jobs do not require diplomas. In general, construction work is physically demanding. Some jobs require a lot of physical strength, but others do not.

How does the future look for this job?

Although progress has been slow, the number of women working in construction jobs is increasing steadily. New government regulations state that construction companies must increase the number of women construction workers if the government is funding any part of the project. These regulations may open up more construction jobs to women even though the growth of the construction industry in New England has been slow in the past five years.

Computer Technician

What is the job?

A technician inspects computers, makes repairs, and installs new equipment. She uses special tools and testing equipment. She may specialize in the kind of computer she works on, or in the kind of repairs she makes.

What are the working conditions and wages?

A computer technician works mostly with her hands, and does not have to be physically strong. Although she may travel from one office to another, she generally works inside, in a clean, well-lighted room. Because of the rapid changes in computer technology, a technician needs to be able to learn new information and skills quickly. A technician trainee earns from $180 to $200 per week. An experienced worker earns from $235 to $300 per week. Because computers are used around the clock, technicians sometimes need to work overtime during evenings and weekends.

What training and qualifications are needed?

A beginning technician needs to have prior training in electronics or electrical engineering. Then she usually attends a company training program for three to six months to learn elementary computer theory and circuitry. She also learns to work on the company's equipment. On-the-job training lasts for six to twelve months, while the trainee works with an experienced technician.

How does the future look for this job?

Job prospects in the computer industry are excellent. Computer use is growing, and new technicians' jobs are rapidly being created. Boston has many computer companies which are expanding and which employ thousands of people.

Drafter

What is the job?

A drafter makes detailed drawings which are used in the design and construction of new buildings, machines, and other products. She also prepares information about the materials which will be used in the project. A beginning drafter starts out as a tracer, reproducing finished drawings. As she gains skill, she is promoted to more demanding and higher-paying jobs. A drafter specializes in one field of work, such as mechanical, electrical, electronic, structural, or architectural drafting.

What are the working conditions and wages?

Most drafters are employed in private companies, including engineering and architectural firms, construction contracting firms, and electrical equipment companies. Because drafting is a desk job, it is not at all strenuous. A beginning drafter earns about $140 per week. A senior drafter earns twice as much, averaging $300 per week.

What training and qualifications are needed?

Courses in drafting are available at technical institutes, vocational and technical high schools, and junior and community colleges. It is important to have a steady hand, and to be able to do accurate and detailed work. Drafting preparation includes courses in mechanical drawing, math, and the physical sciences.

How does the future look for this job?

The employment of drafters is expected to rise locally and nationally.

Maintenance Electrician

What is the job?

A maintenance electrician makes sure that all the electrical equipment in plants and large buildings functions properly. In addition to routine repairs, such as replacing fuses, circuit breakers, and switch-

It weighs the same as my three-year-old and it doesn't squirm.

es, she works on lighting systems and electrical power sources (like generators).

What are the working conditions and wages?

Most maintenance electricians work in large factories, repairing the machinery and the power sources. Some electricians work in office buildings, and others work in large apartment buildings. An experienced maintenance electrician earns from $5 to $8 per hour. Apprentices and trainees earn about 60% of that, and get regular raises. Because working with high voltage machinery requires caution, an electrician is taught to use protective equipment and clothing, and to observe safety precautions.

What training and qualifications are needed?

An electrician learns her trade either through on-the-job training or through a formal apprenticeship program. Although an apprenticeship program (usually four years) is the best training method, some people learn the trade informally by training under skilled workers. To qualify for an apprenticeship program, one must have graduated from high school or vocational school, and have had one year of algebra. A person should have good vision and be physically agile (some of the tasks may involve working in awkward positions).

How does the future look for this job?

Although there is a lot of competition for apprenticeships in the skilled trades, the need for electricians is growing, and new jobs will open up in many companies. One can also get started as a helper to a skilled electrician, possibly an easier way to enter the field.

Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Mechanic

What is the job?

A mechanic installs, inspects, and repairs the machinery which controls building temperatures. She may specialize as an air conditioning and refrigeration mechanic, as an oil burner mechanic, or as a gas burner mechanic.

What are the working conditions and wages?

A skilled mechanic earns from $6 to $14 per hour. A trainee starts at about half of that salary, and gets raises as she gains experience. Mechanics generally work a forty hour week, with overtime during seasonal peaks in mid-summer and mid-winter. They occasionally work in awkward or cramped positions, or in high places.

What training and qualifications are needed?

Most technicians learn the trade on-the-job, over a period of two to five years. A trainee should be in good physical condition, since some of the work is strenuous. Most employers prefer trainees who have finished high school, and who have had a background in electricity or mechanics.

How does the future look for this job?

This field has many new openings. The largest area of growth is air conditioning and refrigeration, although the number of oil burner mechanics is also expanding in states like Massachusetts, which depend largely on oil for heat.

Clothing sales
$ 92
Nurse's aide
$132
Secretary
$155
Police officer
trainee
$175
House painter
apprentice
$185
Drafter
$259

21

If brawn was more important than brains we would all be dinosaurs.

Local Truckdriver

What is the job?

A local truckdriver moves goods within a small area, making pick-ups and deliveries for businesses. She loads or unloads the truck, often with a helper if the loads are heavy or delicate. Most local truckdrivers work for businesses such as department stores, supermarkets, and lumber yards.

What are the working conditions and wages?

A truckdriver in Boston may earn between $4.40 and $8.00 per hour. She is paid by the hour, and gets overtime if she works over forty hours. The amount of lifting or other physical labor varies with the job. However, driving can be hard work since it requires constant attention and care.

What training and qualifications are needed?

Qualifications vary depending on the size of the truck and the type of load. In most states the driver must get a chauffeur's license or commercial driving permit. Applicants should be in good physical condition, and have a good driving record. Sometimes new drivers are trained for a very short time (a day or two) by an experienced employee.

How does the future look for this job?

Job opportunities for truckdrivers are favorable, although most openings result from employee turnover rather than from new jobs.

Chapter 5

Getting Trained

"For women in my mother's generation, being a woman meant that you had to be a wife and mother. Men came first and women came second. Nowadays, the old roles don't work any more, especially for women who are heads of household. I think that now women think of themselves more and realize that they are people who have the same needs and drives and abilities as men. Each woman has to define what is important to her, and how she wants to live her life."

Training is the key for entering most non-traditional fields. Once you know what job you want to do, you need to acquire the skills for that job. When employers in Greater Boston were polled about hiring women for skilled and technical jobs, they expressed great interest in hiring women, if the women had skills for the job. Employers are generally reluctant to set up training programs for new employees because of the expense. Furthermore, they want to hire workers who have shown they are serious about the field. The successful completion of a training program is often an indication that the worker will last on the job. From the worker's point of view, training gives a worker confidence in starting a job, since she knows she has learned the basics about her job.

Training can take a commitment of time and money. Depending on the field and the kind of training you choose, training may take from six months to four years. Fortunately some training options will pay you wages as you learn skills on the job, but others require that you finish training and get a job before you see your first paycheck. You need to look over the kinds of training available and judge how much time and money you can realistically commit to training. Remember that training is an investment in your future.

The following sections describe some training options for women interested in non-traditional work: training through the WIN and CETA programs, apprenticeship, technical schools and others. As you read about these training possibilities, ask yourself these questions:

What kinds of training are available for the field I want to enter?

How long is the training period for each kind of training?

How much time do I have to put into training?

How much money (if any) can I afford to pay?

Work Incentive Program (WIN)

WIN is a program of job training and placement run by the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security and the Department of Public Welfare. An AFDC recipient must register for WIN to keep receiving welfare payments and benefits, unless she qualifies as exempt. Some people who are exempt are: a mother with a child under age six, a person who is ill or permanently incapacitated, a person who must care for someone with a mental or physical impairment, and a person between ages 16 and 21 who is attending school full-time. People who are exempt can register for WIN as volunteers and drop out at any time without a penalty. To enroll in WIN, a welfare recipient will be referred by her welfare worker.

WIN offers these job-related services:

- *On-the-Job Training (OJT).* On OJT, a worker has the chance to earn wages while acquiring skills and experience. The OJT may last from two to eleven months, depending on the level of skill required in the job. WIN will pay for tools that the worker may need for the job. If the worker completes the OJT satisfactorily, she will be given a raise and hired as a permanent employee.
- *Institutional (In-school) Training.* WIN will pay tuition, books and fees for classroom training (such as technical school) for up to a year. The training must be in a field with a good job market. Opportunities for training vary locally, so ask your WIN office how available these funds are for your area.

I might not like six months of homework, but it beats doing other people's housework forever.

Catching Up on the Three Rs

Many free classes in reading, writing, and math are given to adults in the evening by local public schools. The programs consist of Basic Adult Education, which covers basic skills up to eighth grade, and the General Educational Development (GED) Program, which prepares students to take the high school equivalency exam for a diploma. To find the location of classes nearest you, contact your local public school or your local public library. You can also call:

Massachusetts Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Services, 31 St. James Ave., Boston, MA 02116 (727-5784).

In addition, these places offer free classes:

Boston State College, Urban Learning Center, 625 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115 (731-3300, ext. 217).

Boston Adult Learning Center, 89 Franklin St., Boston, MA 02110 (423-9749).

Casa Del Sol, 405 Shawmut Ave., Boston, MA 02118 (536-8280). For women of Hispanic origin.

Women's Service Club, 464 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02118 (262-3935).

- *Work Experience.* WIN participants work as volunteers in private, non-profit or public agencies and organizations for up to thirteen weeks. If the participant needs additional experience for the particular occupation she wants, she may volunteer for another thirteen weeks with another employer.

- *Other Job-Related Services.* WIN also provides regular job counseling and placement; aptitude testing; and referrals to free classes for basic reading, writing, and math skills and high school equivalency.

If you are enrolled in institutional training or volunteer work experience under WIN, you will receive the WIN Incentive Stipend. This is an additional $30 a month plus $2 for every day you attend classes or do volunteer work. The WIN Incentive Stipend is not deducted from your AFDC grant.

For support services, the Welfare Department has staff assigned to WIN; these staff are known as Separate Administrative Unit (SAU) workers. The SAU workers will help you with social services you may need in order to begin working (for example, day care for your children). If you get a job with WIN and you are cut off welfare because your income is too high, you will still be eligible for social services as long as you are registered in WIN.

A recipient who is required to register for WIN and who refuses to participate without good cause may be taken off WIN. If this situation occurs, the recipient may request a hearing and if necessary, appeal the hearing. A recipient who loses is entitled to sixty days of counseling with WIN staff to resolve any problems. If she has not participated at the end of sixty days, however, she will be taken off the WIN program, and her welfare grant may be affected. (The recipient may request a Welfare Department hearing if her grant is cut.) For other problems with WIN, a recipient can go through a grievance procedure of requesting a hearing and possibly appealing the decision.

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 (CETA)

CETA is a state and federally funded program of job training and placement for people who are unemployed, underemployed, or economically disadvantaged. Eligibility requirements differ among the various programs under CETA. Basically you have to be out of work and you have

to meet low-income guidelines. If you are on AFDC, you automatically qualify for all the programs under CETA.

The different programs under CETA are called "Titles." Listed below are the programs of most interest to women on AFDC. (Other CETA programs are directed towards youth.)

Title I

Title I includes On-the-Job Training, Classroom Training, Work Experience, as well as other services.

To find out more information on programs under Title I and to apply, contact your Neighborhood Employment Center (NEC) if you live in Boston. You can get the address and phone number of your NEC from Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), 150 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111 (357-6000, ext. 346). For CETA programs other than Boston, ask your WIN staff worker for CETA office locations. Every town has a local CETA office.

- *On-the-Job Training (OJT).* CETA will place you in a job where the employer is expected to teach you new skills "on-the-job." You are paid the regular salary for that job plus benefits (in most places, at least $3 per hour). The time limit for the OJT varies with the job.
- *Classroom Training.* Boston CETA offers a variety of training programs. Last year training programs were given in non-traditional fields such as the machine trades, welding, auto mechanics, electronics, industrial building maintenance, computer test/service technician, and maintenance mechanic. Ask your CETA staff worker for information on current programs. CETA programs outside Boston may offer skill training programs or may pay your tuition at a technical school. The training must be in a field with good job opportunities. CETA will pay $1,000 to $1,500 per year for classroom training for up to two years.

Most participants in classroom training are paid minimum wage for their hours in school, *but* AFDC recipients are paid only $30 per week, which is not deducted from the AFDC grant.

- *Work Experience.* These are short-term jobs for people who have had little or no work experience. Participants have the opportunity to get a reference for another job, or to try out a certain job. CETA places people only in non-profit agencies and organizations, and pays participants minimum wage ($2.65 per hour) up to 35 hours per week for three to six months.
- *Other Services.* In addition, CETA provides regular job counseling and placement, including testing for aptitudes and skills. Participants may also be placed in programs for reading, writing, and math (basic adult education, or high school equivalency classes). In emergencies, CETA will help participants with problems in day care, transportation, health, food, or housing.

Titles II and VI

Other programs under CETA are Titles II and VI, or Public Service Employment (PSE).

Participants in PSE work for non-profit or public agencies and organizations whose proposals for jobs have been approved by the CETA office. Of all the CETA programs, PSE is the most heavily funded at the present time. Many different kinds of jobs are available: skilled and unskilled labor, clerical, and social service. PSE is a good opportunity for a woman to get some experience in a non-traditional job. In the past PSE has offered non-traditional jobs such as van drivers, construction help, and painters. A job may last from

"Work and learn" is like "Live and learn" except you get paid for the experience.

six months to one year. Contact your WIN staff worker for information on applying.

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (Mass. Rehab.)

Mass. Rehab. is a state and federally funded agency that provides vocational rehabilitation for the emotionally and physically handicapped. People are eligible if they have an emotional or physical handicap that prevents them from getting or keeping a job, and if they have potential for vocational rehabilitation. The term "handicapped" can be broadly interpreted. A person in psychotherapy, for example, may be eligible.

To apply, go to your local office for Mass. Rehab. (listed in the phone book). You can also ask for information from the Boston Regional Office at 80 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116 (426-5835).

Mass. Rehab. has many kinds of services for the disabled. The following are services that may be useful for a woman interested in a non-traditional job:

- *Training Programs*. Mass. Rehab. will pay for classroom training in a college or vocational school. Tuition in a college is limited to $800 per year; tuition for a vocational school has no limits. Mass. Rehab. will usually pay for books and transportation also. For classroom training participants must meet low-income requirements as well as the general eligibility requirements. In general, the most severely handicapped have priority for training, but all eligible clients should not hesitate to apply.

- *Job Placement*. Mass. Rehab. will also help clients assess their skills and find job openings.

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a program of on-the-job training in a skilled craft or trade. As an apprentice, a worker has the chance to earn wages while she learns skills in a structured and supervised work situation. Apprenticeships are offered by unions as well as by private companies. The bricklayers', electricians', and ironworkers' unions, for example, sponsor apprenticeships for their particular trades. A private company may also run an apprenticeship training program for employees. For instance, General Electric Company in Lynn, Massachusetts, offers a three-year machinist apprenticeship. Union apprenticeships are more numerous than company apprenticeships in the Greater Boston area. The largest number of apprenticeships available nationwide are run through the construction unions.

An apprentice works under the supervision of a skilled worker, or journeyman. Depending on the trade, the training period may last from one to five years (usually three to four years. The apprentice will learn the whole range of skills that will eventually qualify her as a journeyman. She must also take several hours of classroom instruction per week, usually in the evening. Upon completing the apprenticeship, the apprentice receives a certificate and journeyman status for her occupation.

Starting pay for an apprentice is about half the going wage for a journeyman in her trade. An apprentice will get raises until she is earning 90% of the journeyman's rate in the last six months of her apprenticeship. In Boston, for example, starting pay for an electrician apprentice in the union is $6 per hour and increases to about $10 per hour in the last phase of apprenticeship. As a journeyman, she earns $12 per hour. All apprenticeships also include benefits such as medical and dental insurance and pension plans.

The competition for apprenticeships is usually keen. In general, an applicant should be between 18 and 29 years of

age, and in good physical health. She usually needs a high school diploma or its equivalent. Applicants for union apprenticeships are accepted at only certain times in the year, and the application process may take up to a year. The applicant will take aptitude tests, and she will be interviewed by a committee of union and management representatives sponsoring the apprenticeship. Company apprenticeship openings vary from company to company, and are listed at the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (see below) when available. An applicant must check with unions or companies on specific requirements for their apprenticeships.

Like all non-traditional jobs for women, the apprenticeable trades may present problems of sex discrimination in hiring, or difficulties on the job with male co-workers. However, more and more women are now becoming apprentices. In fact, their number will increase dramatically with new federal regulations passed this year. The regulations require that 20% of the apprentices in federally-funded apprenticeship programs (which include all union and company apprenticeships) must be women.

For more information on apprenticeship, contact: Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, John F. Kennedy Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203 (223-6745), a federal agency under the Department of Labor. The bureau has information on specific apprenticeship programs, both union and company, as well as information about specific trades. You can register here for company apprenticeship programs.

Division of Employment and Training, 100 Cambridge St., Boston, MA 02202 (727-3486). This is the state agency in charge of registering apprenticeship programs.

Apprenticeship Information Center, Church Park Job Center, 189 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02139 (727-7473). The place to go for apprenticeship openings. The Center receives public notification from unions when their apprenticeships open up. If you notify the Center of your interest in a particular apprenticeship, you will be contacted when that apprenticeship opens up.

Local unions can also give you information about applying for apprenticeships in their unions. Contact the following representatives for these trades:

Asbestos Workers. Joseph Zampitella, 1725 Revere Beach Parkway, Everett, MA 02149 (387-0909).

Bricklayers. Donald Bertucchi, 550 Medford St., Charlestown, MA 02129 (242-5507).

Carpenters. Apprenticeship Advisor, 385 R Market St., Brighton, MA 02135 (782-4314) or Edward Gallagher, 263 Washington St., Newton, MA 02158.

Cement Masons. John O'Neil, 718 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115 (731-1736).

Electricians. Robert F. Regan, 80 Crescent Ave., Newton Centre, MA 02159 (527-6811).

Floor Covering Installers. Neil Sullivan, 100 Hano St., Allston, MA 02134 (787-1845).

Glaziers. Apprenticeship Advisor, 718 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115 (731-6800).

Ironworkers. Thomas Maher, 35 Travis St., Allston, MA 02134 (254-7686).

Lathers. Henry Sheerin, 183 State St., Boston, MA 02109 (723-5882).

Operating Engineers. James Grande, 120 Mount Hope St., Roslindale, MA 02131 (323-8553).

Painters. John Chrisostamo, 161 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02115 (536-1039).

Pipefitters. Robert E. Scannell, 40 Enterprise St., Boston, MA 02125 (825-3777).

Plasterers. Martin Curry, 183 State St., Boston, MA 02109 (723-5838).

Plumbers. John B. Fandel, 41 Winter St., Rm. 66, Boston, MA 02108 (542-3333).

Roofers. Gerald Bean, 925 Washington St., Rm. 12, Dorchester, MA 02124 (288-7451).

Sheetmetal Workers. Joseph W. Joyce, 216 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02116 (542-8557).

Sprinkler Fitters. George McCarthy, 80 Boylston St., Rm. 508, Boston, MA 02116 (426-1591).

Tile Setting. Donald Bertucchi, 550 Medford St., Charlestown, MA 02129 (242-5507).

Technical Schools

You can also learn a skilled trade by going to school. Training programs in many fields, like electricity and electronics, computer technology, drafting, and mechanics, are given at private technical schools, community colleges, technical high schools, and adult education centers. A program may last from six months to several years depending upon the field.

When you consider the option of going to a technical school, you should find out about as many schools as possible. Public schools or adult education centers often offer the same courses as private technical schools, and cost much less. An excellent source for these programs is *Educational Opportunities in Greater Boston*, a directory listing 220 public and private schools and over 6,000 adult education courses. (Check your public library. The book is also available for $4.95 in many local bookstores, and from The Education Exchange of Greater Boston, 17 Dunster St., Cambridge, MA 02138.)

Choosing the right school can take time. Although many schools offer quality training, others have programs of questionable merit. These are some questions to consider as you look over a school:

What is the school like?

Visit the school, attend a class or two and talk with some students. You can also set up an appointment with a staff person from the Admissions Office, and ask about the length and cost of the program and the availability of financial aid.

Does the school have a job placement service?

A good school will have a placement service to help its graduates get jobs. Ask how many students in the program which you are interested in found jobs after graduation. Also ask what their starting salaries were. A good placement rate for most schools is 75%.

How many students entering the program which you are interested in completed the program?

The drop-out rate should be low in a good program. Furthermore, a school that is serious about training students for a trade will screen applicants carefully for their potential to finish the program.

What do local employers think of the school?

Call the personnel directors at some companies where you may want to work. Ask if the firm hires graduates from the school, or if any particular school can be recommended for getting a job in that firm.

Is the school licensed by the state?

Although a Massachusetts license does not certify quality, it does indicate that the school is legitimate and stable, not a fly-by-night operation. A source for all state-licensed schools in Massachusetts is *The Student Consumer's Handbook* (free and available from Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education, Office of Private Schools, 31 St. James Ave., Boston, MA 02116). You can also call the Department of Education (727-5738), to find out whether any complaints have been filed against a school you are considering.

Financial Aid

The financial aid office at a school can give you information about scholarships or loans offered by the school. In addition there are five federally funded financial aid programs which you should look into: Basic Education Opportunity Grants (BEOG), National Direct Student Loans, Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants, College Work Study, and Guaranteed Student Loans. The financial aid office at any school should be able to tell you about these federal programs.

I see that in the future you will have a future.

Chapter 6

Getting a Non-Traditional Job

"I live in a neighborhood of working class people who are mostly very traditional. The neighbors think that I am a little weird. They are used to seeing me do things like mowing the lawn, painting the house, and shoveling snow. They probably think that I would be interested in taking a non-traditional job. They are right!"

Once you have decided what you want to be and you have acquired the necessary training, you have completed the most difficult and important steps in finding a job. Your strength is that you are confident in your choice. Job-hunting, the next phase, can be tedious. Remember that everyone has done job-hunting at some time, no one enjoys it, and most people have trouble selling themselves for particular jobs. What you need now is to muster your determination and patience, and get the support you need from family and friends.

Overcoming Sex Stereotypes

Women who want to enter non-traditional fields may face obstacles that are special to non-traditional jobs. For example, an employer may be reluctant to hire a woman for a non-traditional job. An employer may be surprised that a woman is even interested in working as an electrician, welder, or laborer. More seriously, the employer may not hire her because of doubts about her competence or her interest in the job.

Job counseling services also may present problems to a woman interested in a non-traditional job. Many job counselors have never considered recruiting women for non-traditional fields. A counselor may not mention non-traditional job openings or encourage a woman to look into them. This kind of resistance is based on stereotypes about women. These stereotypes are generalizations about what women can do, what they should do, and what they want to do. Statements like "women aren't strong enough to do a man's job," "women are afraid of machines," and "women are only interested in office work" are all examples of common stereotypes about women. These stereotypes are found throughout our society. In magazines and television shows, for instance, women are often shown as weak, silly, or incompetent, and they rarely do any jobs but traditional women's jobs.

If you choose a non-traditional field, you will probably come across these prejudices and you will have to deal with them. Although these attitudes can be discouraging, remember that women who now hold non-traditional jobs have overcome these obstacles. For these women, overcoming such obstacles was worthwhile for getting and keeping a non-traditional job.

Looking for a Job

Resourcefulness is the key in looking for a job. Try to think of as many sources for job leads as you can. You should read the ads in the *Boston Globe* Sundays or early in the morning, and contact possible employers quickly. Use the services of WIN and CETA. Visit the personnel departments of companies you are interested in. Tell people you are looking for work and ask them for jobs they may know about, or the names of people who may know about jobs. Friends, relatives, neighbors, people at parties, clergy, and store clerks are all people to talk to.

Since most large industries are located in the Boston suburbs, you also need to get reliable transportation for finding a job (and later, for getting to work). If you do not know how to drive, you should consider taking lessons and getting a license. If you do not have a car, you should think seriously about getting one. A car will enable you to apply for more jobs, and provide you with the most reliable means of transportation once you get a job. If you cannot buy a car, perhaps you can borrow a car while you are looking for a job, and make other arrangements for transportation when you begin working.

What do you say if an employer objects to hiring a woman for a non-traditional job?

Below are some possible arguments against hiring women in non-traditional jobs, as well as some suggested responses.

What the Employer May Say	What You Can Say
The job is too dangerous for a woman.	If the job is too dangerous for a woman, it is probably too dangerous for anyone.
The job is too physically demanding for a woman.	Physical strength can be built up. A woman can do heavier work when she has been trained to use her muscles efficiently. Besides, there are both weak men and strong men. Such differences also exist among women.
The working conditions are poor. No woman would work here.	Perhaps the working conditions are too poor for anyone. Or: Show me around and see if I agree.
The swearing of male co-workers would offend women.	Protecting women from the realities of life is old-fashioned. If women don't like swearing they can tell their co-workers. The workers may stop swearing themselves. Besides, swearing isn't restricted to the male sex.
Less work will get done because of sexual advances and flirtation on the job.	Work has always gotten done before in other job situations where women and men work together.
A woman will stay home when her children are sick.	All serious workers have thought about possible problems and ways to deal with them. The facts are that female workers are absent only slightly more than male workers (about half a day per year).
Women will take jobs away from men.	No sex has any right to jobs. Why should men be more entitled to jobs than women? Many women have to support themselves and their children.

Women don't have relevant backgrounds for these jobs.	Women were not allowed to take shop courses in school or encouraged to fix their own cars. If you are serious about wanting to hire women, you must be willing to consider skills a woman has acquired from homemaking or traditional women's jobs. You will also have to think about waiving the years of job experience many women never had a chance to get.
A woman would not be as committed to the job as a man.	A woman head of household needs her job just as much as a male breadwinner.
Women could not take the emotional stress.	Poor women who are single heads of households are accustomed to emotional stress.
There are no toilet facilities for women.	Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of sex. Lack of toilet facilities is inadequate grounds for not hiring women. It is the employer's responsibility to provide rest rooms for all workers, even if that means adding new facilities.
Welfare mothers are lazy and do not really want to work.	Everyone is an individual. Generalizations about any group don't recognize differences among people. Many welfare mothers are highly motivated to get off welfare, and to get jobs that will support their families.

Going for the Interview

Interviews work both ways. The employer has the chance to meet you and to acquire information about you that cannot be obtained from a written application (for instance, your motivation for wanting the job). You have the chance to present yourself, and to judge whether you would like to work for that company in that particular job.

When you go for an interview, keep in mind some basic do's and don'ts: have a list of past jobs with dates handy, be on time, shake hands firmly when you meet the interviewer, and look directly at the interviewer when you speak. Also:

Know about the job and the company. Before the interview, learn as much as you can about the job in general (refer to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, or other sources). If possible, find out the specifics of the job in this company. Also learn about the company and its products. Nothing is more insulting to an employer than a job applicant who walks in and asks, "What do you make here?" You can learn about a company from its annual report, which you can request free from the

My apartment was neater before I had a job. Empty closets and bare shelves are easy to clean.

company or find in the public library. If you are pressed for time, try calling the company's public relations department, and ask what the company does or what products it makes.

Be prepared to talk about yourself. Point out to the employer your skills, interests and experiences that are relevant to the job. Think hard! Making a connection between your qualifications and the job shows the employer you are a serious applicant. If the employer does not ask about your qualifications, bring the subject up yourself. Do not apologize for a lack of experience in the field. Make clear to the employer that you want the job, and explain why.

Ask questions. The employer will inevitably ask you if you have any questions. Prepare some questions beforehand, especially questions about job duties. You may also inquire about health benefits; the possibility of moving up into other jobs in the company; or tuition reimbursement for employees who take work-related courses in the evening. Asking questions also shows you are serious about the job.

Be prepared for questions. You may be asked simple questions about your background and interests, but you may also get some "curves." These are some examples of "curves":

"Tell me something about yourself that's not on the application."

"What do you want to be doing five years from now?"

"How long have you been looking for work?"

"Why are you interested in working at this company?"

"Are you a women's libber?"

"What are you going to do when you hear men you work with use four letter words?"

"What are your strengths and weaknesses?"

For these kinds of questions, your best strategy is to think ahead about possible answers. Practice with a friend some answers that are comfortable for you to use.

You may also be asked illegal questions, such as:

"Who will take care of your children while you are at work?"

"Are you willing to work overtime?"

"Do you plan to have children?"

"Can you lift (such and such number of) pounds?"

Again, if you have anticipated these questions, you can have some answers ready. Your answers may depend on how much you want the job. You could simply say: "I don't feel I have to answer that," or "That's an illegal question, but I'll answer it anyway," or "I have made all the necessary preparations so that I can do my job here," or "How does this relate to the job?" When you answer, be calm and direct.

You also need to give some thought to the way you dress for the interview. Dress appropriately for the job for which you are applying. A good rule of thumb is to dress as you would for your first day on the job. If the job involves getting dirty and sweaty, for example, do not dress like a "glamour girl." Dress simply, in a plain shirt and slacks with comfortable shoes. Although you may prefer to dress up, the interviewer may look at your skirt, high heels, and jewelry and think that you are not suited for the job. On the other hand, you should dress as professionally as possible if you are applying for a job where you will represent the company to customers. For instance, typewriter or copier repairers visit other business offices to do their work. This kind of employer is looking not only for someone who can repair machines, but also for someone who looks as though she belongs in a downtown office. Dark slacks with a shirt and jacket are ideal for such an interview.

Chapter 7

Working and Welfare

"Working has opened up a whole new life for me. I am much happier, because I know that I can depend on myself and make it on my own. Even though my children don't always like it when I go to work, they sense that I am happier and less worried, and so they are happier too."

Once you land the job, make plans to ensure you can stay on the job and reap the benefits of good steady pay and confidence from using your skills. Think ahead. What changes can you expect in your day-to-day life, and how can you adjust to these changes more easily?

Changes in Eligibility for Welfare Programs

If you are on AFDC, getting a job poses a question about your eligibility for AFDC, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Emergency Assistance, and Social Services from the Welfare Department. What happens to a woman's eligibility for these programs if she gets a job? How much does she have to make before she is cut off from AFDC? These questions are difficult to answer because welfare regulations are complex. In general, a woman who gets a non-traditional job is likely to be cut off from AFDC, Medicaid, and Emergency Assistance because non-traditional jobs pay good wages. However, she will probably receive at least one more welfare payment after she reports she has a job.

She may also remain eligible for Food Stamps and Social Services from the Welfare Department. Although it is hard to give up the welfare grant and other benefits which your family has depended on, remember that your income from a job is greater than your welfare grant. Most employers, furthermore, offer health insurance which can be a partial substitute for Medicaid, in addition to other benefits, such as life insurance and pension plans.

The following sections explain the regulations that determine your eligibility for AFDC and other programs if you get a job. If you can estimate what your income and expenses are likely to be when you get a job, you can figure out beforehand what changes will occur in your welfare grant and other benefits. (You can ask your welfare worker for help.)

AFDC: the 30 and 1/3 formula

When you report to your welfare worker that you have a job, you will be asked to submit one or more pay stubs. Your eligibility to stay on AFDC will then be calculated according to a formula called "30 and 1/3." In the 30 and 1/3 formula, the first $30 you earn each month, plus one-third of the remainder and your work-related expenses do not count against your welfare check. If your monthly income is below your monthly welfare check after the 30 and 1/3 formula is calculated, you will still collect some money from AFDC, but your monthly check will be less. However, if your monthly income goes above your welfare check after 30 and 1/3 is calculated, you will be cut off from AFDC.

The pay a woman must earn before she is cut off from AFDC is different for everyone because work-related expenses, which are different for everyone, are calculated in the 30 and 1/3 formula. You can first deduct a flat $28 for work-related expenses if you work a forty-hour week. You can then deduct other expenses that arise because you are working. Additional expenses include child care, transportation, lunches, taxes, insurance, union dues, compulsory pension plans, uniforms, tools, equipment, telephone service needed for business, and educational expenses. The higher your total work-related expenses are, the more likely you will stay on AFDC.

Here are some examples of how the 30 and 1/3 formula works:

Example One:

A woman gets a job that pays $360.00 a month. She has one child and she gets $250.80 a month on welfare.

First, calculate her new income according to the 30 and 1/3 formula, to see if she stays on welfare.

Total (gross) pay from new job	$360.00
Subtract $30.00	- 30.00
	$330.00
Subtract 1/3 of the balance	- 110.00
	$220.00
Subtract for work-related expenses	- 70.00
(For this woman, work-related expenses total $70.00.)	$150.00

This figure of $150.00 is less than her monthly welfare grant of $250.80, so she stays on welfare.

Next, calculate how much her new welfare check will be.

Old welfare check	$250.80
Subtract income on 30 and 1/3 formula	- 150.00
Remainder after 30 and 1/3 is calculated	$100.80

Her new monthly welfare check is $100.80.

Last, calculate how much money she will get altogether in a month.

Pay from job	$360.00
New welfare check	+ 100.80
Total monthly income	$460.80

She will get $460.80 a month, compared to $250.80 a month she got on welfare.

Example Two

A woman gets a job that pays $660.00 a month. (Obviously she has a non-traditional job.) She has one child, and she gets $250.80 a month on welfare.

First, calculate her new income according to the 30 and 1/3 formula, to see if she still stays on welfare.

Total (gross) pay from new job	$660.00
Subtract $30.00	- 30.00
	$630.00
Subtract 1/3 of balance	- 210.00
	$420.00
Subtract work-related expenses	- 90.00
(For this woman, work-related expenses total $90.00.)	$330.00

The figure of $330.00 is more than her monthly welfare grant of $250.80, so she is off welfare.

Here is a worksheet to calculate the 30 and 1/3 formula for yourself:

First, calculate whether you will stay on welfare.

Total (gross) pay from new job	$_____
Subtract $30.00	- 30.00
	$_____
Subtract 1/3 of the balance	-_____
	$_____
Subtract for work-related expenses	-_____
	$_____

Is this figure more or less than your monthly welfare grant? If less, you still stay on welfare.

Next, calculate what your new welfare grant will be.

Old welfare grant	$_____
Remainder after 30 and 1/3 is calculated	-_____
What is your new welfare grant?	$_____

Last, calculate how much money you will get altogether in a month.

Pay from job	$_____
New welfare check	+_____
	$_____

You will get $_____ a month, compared to $_____ a month if not working.

Medicaid
If you still qualify for AFDC after 30 and 1/3, you still qualify for Medicaid. However, if you are disqualified for AFDC because your income has become too high, you will stay on Medicaid for about four months after you start working. The four months are counted from the first of the month. If you start working in the middle of May, for example, you will be covered through August, not through the middle of September.

If your employer covers you for health insurance, Medicaid will cover other services not covered by your employer's health insurance for these four months. If you are disqualified from AFDC and Medicaid, you can still apply for Medical Assistance (MA) for yourself and your children. The MA program will cover the same services as Medicaid. Eligibility depends upon your income, the size of your family, and your resources. However, because the income requirements are the same for MA and Medicaid, it is unlikely you will qualify for MA if you have been disqualified from Medicaid because of a higher income.

Food Stamps
You may still be eligible for Food Stamps, but you will probably pay more for them because your income is higher. You are supposed to report changes in your income of $25 or more.

Emergency Assistance
Once you no longer meet the income requirements for AFDC, you are not eligible for Emergency Assistance.

Social Services
Even if you are disqualified from AFDC because of higher income, you can still get Social Services, including day care, as long as you meet the income guidelines. (The guidelines are listed below.) You may also continue getting Social Services if you are registered in the WIN program (see the chapter, "Getting Trained").

The Number of People in Your Household Is:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
And Your Income Over a Four-Week Payroll Period Is No More Than:	$369	$562	$677	$762	$838	$915	$1000

More than 7, add $105 for each additional member.

Basic Information on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)
AFDC is a public program of financial assistance for families in need that have dependent children. The program is run by the Massachusetts Department of Public Welfare. Several categories of low-income people are eligible for AFDC: their eligibility depends on their income, in addition to other factors. When a woman applies for AFDC at her local welfare office, the welfare staff person asks for information about her financial situation, and determines whether she is eligible for AFDC according to income guidelines.

If you are on AFDC, you are eligible for these programs:
Medicaid, and Project Good Health
Food Stamps
Emergency Assistance
Social Services through the Welfare Department

And there's the building Momma helped build

You may also be required to enroll in the WIN program (see the chapter, "Getting Trained").

The amount of money you get on AFDC depends on the number of people in your family. For example, as of May 1978, a family of two receives $250.80 a month; a family of three, $304.30 a month; and a family of four, $357.80 a month; and so on. The first check is sent thirty days from the time you first apply, so it is important to have your first visit to the welfare office recorded by a welfare worker, even if you only make an appointment. The monthly AFDC grant is paid in two checks and mailed on a date determined by your social security number. The monthly checks are supposed to cover rent, utilities, food and miscellaneous living expenses. Four times a year—in March, June, September and December—an additional check, or "flat grant," is sent to you to cover expenses such as clothing or furniture.

The amount of the flat grant also depends on the size of your family. For instance, a family of two receives a flat grant of $85.60; a family of three, $99.30; and a family of four, $113.00.

If you need help immediately when you first apply for AFDC, the welfare worker can make provisions to cover rent and utilities. You may also get medical services and emergency food stamps. Because welfare vouchers are later deducted from the monthly welfare checks, you should try to meet your needs through the Emergency Assistance program.

Medicaid and Project Good Health

Medicaid is a public program of health insurance for the financially needy. You are covered for most regular medical expenses, such as visits to a doctor, clinic or hospital, as well as for emergency care. Medicaid will pay for most prescription drugs, but not for over-the-counter medicines (medicines that can be bought without a prescription). Dental work may be covered for children and adults, depending on various restrictions.

You are encouraged to use your Medicaid coverage in Project Good Health, which provides preventive health care to your children. Medicaid will pay for these services for your children: medical and dental exams and treatments; immunizations; and tests for lead poisoning, sickle cell anemia, diabetes, tuberculosis and other diseases.

Medicaid will cover medical expenses that occurred up to three months before your application, if the expenses are still unpaid and if you would have qualified for Medicaid at that time.

Your welfare worker, doctor, and dentist can answer questions you may have about your Medicaid coverage. When you want a certain medical service, you should ask whether Medicaid is accepted, what is covered, and how often you can get the service. Many welfare offices have lists of doctors, dentists, and medical services that accept Medicaid.

Twice a month you will receive an identification card for Medicaid in the mail. Whenever you use a medical service, bring the card with you.

Food Stamps

Food Stamps are coupons that are used like money to buy food at supermarkets, grocery stores and food co-ops. You buy Food Stamps at a price less than they are worth at a store. For example, a family of four with an income of $357 a month (after deductions) may buy $170 worth of Food Stamps for $95. The number of stamps you can buy and how much you pay for them depends on the size of your household, your income, and your expenses. After you are approved for Food Stamps, you will receive an identification card in the mail, as well as an Authoriza-

tion-to-Purchase (ATP) card. You can buy Food Stamps at stores, banks or agencies in your community. Ask your welfare worker for specific locations.

Emergency Assistance (EA)

Emergency Assistance is a public program of relief to families with children under twenty-one. If you are on AFDC, you can use Emergency Assistance regularly to meet various needs, whether or not you would ordinarily consider the situation an "emergency."

To apply for Emergency Assistance, contact your welfare worker. You can apply Emergency Assistance only once in a twelve-month period, unless you suffer a natural disaster (for example, a fire or flood beyond your control). You must request everything you need within thirty days of applying for Emergency Assistance, but you can request more than one item. Because you can apply for Emergency Assistance only once every twelve months, try to think ahead of everything you need and decide what you need most.

The list below gives some things you can request from Emergency Assistance. The list is only basic. *For many of the items you will have to fulfill additional requirements.* Ask your welfare worker for the details.

Appliances. Repair or replacement of appliances, such as stove or refrigerator.

Children's bedding. Bedding for a child three months before to three months after the child's third birthday.

Disaster relief. Furniture, household goods, food and clothing lost in a disaster, and security deposit for one month's rent.

Emergency shelter. Shelter for thirty days in a hotel or boarding house if you have been evicted for a reason other than nonpayment of rent.

Home repairs. Up to $500 in home repairs if the present condition of your house presents a health or safety hazard.

Moving costs up to $150.

Mortgage payments. Up to four months of mortgage payments if you have been given notice of foreclosure.

Rent. Up to four months of back rent if you have been given notice of eviction for nonpayment of rent and a summary writ.

Storage. Storage costs for furniture if the cost of getting the furniture back is less than the cost of buying new furniture.

Utility bills. Up to six months of back bills, if you have received notice that the gas, electricity and/or oil will be shut off. Telephone service is not covered.

Social Services from the Welfare Department

The Welfare Department offers many kinds of social services to AFDC recipients. However, with the exception of Project Good Health, there are no formal programs. The office emphasizes protective services for child abuse and neglect. In general, if you have a need with which the office may be of help, ask a social worker. You apply for social services at the Service Office of the Welfare Department, or at your local welfare office. Bring your Medicaid card with you. You can send somebody to the office for you, or request that the necessary forms be sent to you.

Some services you can ask for are:

Day care. A few kinds of day care are available: family day care in a private home, group day care in a day care center, and babysitting. For babysitting, the Welfare Department will pay only twenty hours per week in the parent's home, at $.55 per child per hour. You have two options for paying a babysitter.

You can have the Welfare Department pay your sitter directly. However, payment to your sitter may take months.

OR

You can deduct child care expenses from your work-related expenses when the "30 and 1/3" formula is calculated. The option allows you to pay your sitter on time, and may also keep you eligible for AFDC under the "30 and 1/3" formula.

Family planning, treatment for VD, referrals to other health services, help with transportation to medical appointments.

Counseling and services for the mentally retarded.

Chores, such as the performance of household tasks, shopping, or minor household repairs.

Homemaker services, such as the non-medical care of an ill or disabled member of the family, light housekeeping, preparation of meals, laundry.

Appeals

If you have been turned down for AFDC, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Emergency Assistance, or Social Services, and you disagree, or if your benefits have changed and you disagree, you can appeal the decision. Keep in mind, however, that the appeals process may take one to two months (or even longer) although regulations say you must get a decision within a certain time. Ask a social worker for the procedures for appeals, and also for the date by which you should get a decision.

Getting Help for Welfare Problems

Outside the welfare system, the best place to go for help is the Greater Boston Legal Services. Legal Services offers free legal aid to welfare recipients and others whose income is under $4,000 per year. Offices are located throughout Boston and in two suburban communities. Check the phone book for the office nearest you and call for an appointment.

You can also try:

Mass. Law Reform, 2 Park Square, Boston 02116 (482-0890). Ask for Sue Ochs.

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), 150 Tremont Street, Boston 02111 (357-6000). Call to ask for the Area Planning Action Council (APAC) office nearest you. The APAC office may help you with welfare problems.

Massachusetts Welfare Recipients for Welfare Reform (MWRWR), 641A Washington Street, Dorchester 02124 (436-6620); and 34½ Beacon Street, Boston 02108 (523-6400). This group may be difficult to reach, but keep trying. Ask specifically for this group.

Finding Day Care

Making arrangements for day care can be the most important consideration for a mother planning to go to work. You need to decide what kind of day care you want, the hours for which you need day care, and how much you can afford to pay. You must also think about what you will do when your child is on school vacation, or when your child is sick. Try to have one or two possibilities available in case of emergencies.

Before you begin work, give yourself time to visit any day care facilities you are considering. There are basically two types of day care facilities, day care centers (group day care) and family day care. Both types provide play facilities, adult supervision and arrangements for meals. Day care centers are institutional programs that serve large numbers of pre-school age children. Settings and services vary from center to center. Day care centers of this type are licensed by the Office for Children (the Massachusetts state agency in charge of day care). The Office for Children checks the center for health, safety, equipment, trained staff and suitable

What "a nice girl like me" is doing on a job like this is the very best I can.

space. Family day care programs are located in private homes, usually the homes of parents. These programs take up to six children. The adult is licensed by the Office for Children, and may be trained by another organization that handles day care. The home must meet basic safety standards.

Fees for full-time day care in Boston range from $25 to $75 per week. The average is between $30 and $40 per week. Many day care centers have welfare slots, which are positions paid by the Welfare Department. These slots are open to your child if you meet income guidelines, but they often have a waiting list. (Ask your welfare worker for more information.) In addition, some centers will charge fees according to a sliding scale (that is, the amount you pay will depend on how high your income is). Other day care centers are parent cooperatives where parents contribute work hours and lower the cost of day care.

Some questions you can ask of a particular center are:

What are the fees?

What hours is the center open?

What is the largest number of children the center will take? (A large center will have more space and equipment, and a larger staff with more varied skills and interests. However, a smaller group of children will encourage more contact between the same children.)

What is the ratio of adults to children? (The more adults, the better. A desirable ratio should be one adult for six to ten children.)

How much space does the center have? What are the outdoor facilities?

What services does the center offer? Transportation, meals, sleeping and napping facilities?

Are there men on the staff in teacher or aide positions?

What is the racial and ethnic mix of the staff and children?

Over a hundred day care programs are located in the Greater Boston area. The following is a list of agencies that will make referrals to day care facilities or that have day care programs:

Office for Children, 120 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116 (727-8898). The first place to go if you are looking for day care in Boston. OFC distributes a free 16-page list of day care centers in Boston.

Child Care Resource Center, 187 Hampshire St., Cambridge, MA 02139 (547-9861). The center makes referrals to day care centers, and has listings on file of day care centers. The file gives information on the type of center, cost, size and open slots.

The Family Day Care, The Women's Educational and Industrial Union (WEIU), Mass. Mental Health Research Corp., 12 Station St., Brookline, MA 02146 (738-0703). WEIU runs a family day care program open from 7:15 to 5:45. Most children are infants up to five years, but some homes provide after-school care. Many slots are free for women on AFDC.

Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), 150 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111 (357-6000, ext. 442). ABCD administers eighteen local Headstart programs. A Headstart day is usually four to six hours long. All programs provide transportation and meals. Free of charge if you meet the income guidelines.

Catholic Charitable Bureau of Boston, 10 Derne St., Boston, MA 02114 (523-5165). Family day care is available.

You can also consider arrangements for child care other than day care facilities.

Some possibilities are:

Having your child stay at the house of a friend or neighbor after school.

Arranging hours with a relative or friend to alternate shifts of care.

Trading off a room to a student or relative in return for babysitting services.

Hiring someone on Social Security in return for shopping, cooking, or other housekeeping services.

Living in a collective household or sharing a two-family house with a friend, where you can work out different schedules for child care.

Hiring a teenager.

Staying on the Job

Like all working mothers, you will have to set new priorities. Spending time with your children will compete with the time necessary to run the house. You will probably find it impossible to do as much cleaning, cooking, and shopping as you did before you got a full-time job. Make decisions about what is important to you, and when possible, plan ahead for meals, shopping and other chores.

When you start the job you may feel unsure of yourself, even if you have gotten good training. This is an entirely natural reaction. You will want to do very well, and you may worry that your work is not good enough. As a woman on a non-traditional job, you may also be concerned that your employer will hire other women depending on your performance. Often this kind of pressure comes mostly from yourself—so take it easy!

The life of a working mother is no small challenge. You must remember that there is a period of adjustment when you begin working, not only for yourself, but also for your children, co-workers and supervisors. You may need to become accustomed to the strain of full-time work, especially if the work is physically demanding. Try to find people who will help you and support you as you start your new job, and give yourself time—three to six months—to adjust to your new life.

Know Your Legal Rights on the Job

State and federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, race, religion or national origin in employment and related issues. You are entitled to:

Equal opportunity in applying for training or a job

Equal pay for equal work (the same pay a man gets for the same type of work)

The minimum wage ($2.65 per hour)

Overtime pay (pay for work beyond your required hours, if you are paid by the hour)

Membership or participation in union activities

Maternity benefits

If you think you have been discriminated against in trying to get a job (including training or other assistance for employment), in applying for a job, or in getting maternity benefits or fair treatment in case of pregnancy while working, call:

Equal Employment Commission, 150 Causeway, 10th Floor, Boston, MA 02114 (223-4535). Near North Station.

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, 1 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (727-3990 or 727-4145).

If you think you have been discriminated against in the amount of pay you receive (including equal pay for work, minimum wages, overtime pay), call:

U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, 100 Somerset St., Rm. 1522, Boston, MA 02110 (223-6751).

If you think you have been discriminated against in joining or participating in union activities, call:

Labor Management Services Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 110 Tremont St., Rm. 211, Boston, MA 02108 (223-6734).

Chapter 8

The Other Side of the Desk: Counseling Women for Non-Traditional Jobs

Right now I lack experience as a mechanic but three years ago I didn't know anything about being a single parent on welfare. Having survived that, I can do anything.

This chapter will present some techniques for counseling women for non-traditional jobs. It is primarily for counselors, workers, and job developers who may be in a position to advise AFDC women on non-traditional jobs. However, other readers of this book may find the information useful, and should feel free to look through this section.

Non-traditional work is not right for everyone. However, some women have an aptitude for this kind of work, and would be interested in these jobs if they thought the jobs were available. As a counselor, you are unlikely to meet a woman who will walk into your office, sit down and say she wants a non-traditional job (unless she has read this book). The concept of women's work versus men's work in our society has blocked out certain kinds of jobs for women in most people's minds. The client is unlikely to mention non-traditional job options, and until recently, most counselors would not have mentioned them either.

Welfare recipients are pragmatists. Often they will simply ask, "What kinds of jobs do you have?" Or, if you question them about the sort of work they are interested in, they may say, "Anything." In these circumstances, "anything" probably translates into domestic work, clerical work, or factory assembly. Most recipients have already held these jobs. They believe these jobs are all they have to choose from, and are often discouraged by the low pay.

You can help the client most by being objective and well-informed. You should not be perceived as wanting to "convert" clients to non-traditional work, or as trying to discourage them from these options. Whenever possible, you should present a balanced view of the advantages and disadvantages of non-traditional jobs, and help each individual make a good decision for herself.

Before introducing non-traditional options, allow enough time to work with your client, so you can establish a rapport. Your client should feel safe to explore these kinds of jobs, probably for the first time in her life. You should bring up non-traditional options in a context of job exploration. There are many different ways and styles. Below is a process adapted from a training manual for WIN staff entitled *Increasing Job Options for Women in Non-Traditional Job Placement* (Center for Human Systems, Inc., Suite 540, 2021 L St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036). Adapt this method or change it completely until it is "yours."

Step One: Gather Information to Assess the Client's Potential for a Non-Traditional Job

As an experienced interviewer, you have developed your own style for collecting background information on work experience, education and interests. In order to get a more complete picture of your client's potential for a non-traditional job, explore the same subjects, but just a little differently or more extensively. You may have to delve beyond the titles of jobs she has held to discover skills and interests translatable to non-traditional options.

The following are some questions relevant to non-traditional work:

Has your client held any jobs involving physical labor?

What generic skills were involved in some of the "women's jobs" she has held (e.g., handling equipment, following or giving instructions, working independently)?

What jobs did she enjoy most, and why?

In what abilities and skills is she most confident?

Has she done any volunteer work in her community, church, or school? What skills did the work entail?

Does she have any hobbies (e.g., sports, photography)?

Does she cook or bake, do needlework, or make clothes?

Does she fix things that break around her house?

What extracurricular school activities did she participate in?

What additional information would she like you to know about her talents, skills, interests, and aptitudes?

Step Two: Clarify Job Values

The next step is to discuss with your client the factors which are important to her in considering a job. The Job Value Clarification Guide (see following page) is a tool for discussing the client's job values and seeing how they relate to some past jobs. Once you have collected all background information, including homemaker skills, and she has defined her job values, you will have a good picture of her potential for a non-traditional job.

Using the Job Clarification Guide

Show your client the chart and explain its purpose.

The first column lists the values about which you are trying to obtain the client's views. Ask your client to select three or four job characteristics which are most important to her. Discuss them. Ask her to then classify the other values on the list, using the code: I-important (must have); D-desirable (if possible); N-makes no difference.

Use column two to record any important comments about client's feelings or situation.

Discuss one or more of the jobs she has held. Find out what she liked and disliked about the jobs. Use + and - in the third and fourth columns for recording the outstanding likes and dislikes.

Now ask her to look at how many of her I's were met in these jobs.

Summarize together the important patterns in the chart, i.e., her most important values, outstanding features of past work, and the match or lack of match between values and likes and dislikes.

Step Three: Discuss Non-Traditional Options

By the time you get to this step you have gathered enough information to discuss the possibility of a non-traditional job. (If you feel a non-traditional job is inappropriate for your client, you do not have to raise the option.) Initiating a discussion about non-traditional jobs is best handled in the manner most natural for you. One possibility is to use the information from the job values discussion and relate your client's values to non-traditional options. Often one or more of the client's most important job values is involved in many non-traditional jobs. For example, if your client identified salary as an important value, you can mention that non-traditional jobs meet that value. Or, if you have some non-traditional openings on hand, you can show them to her and ask her if she would be interested. A general discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of non-traditional work (see the chapter, "The Pros and Cons of a Non-Traditional Job") might be another approach. Your objective is to help your client see that a non-traditional job is a possibility, one of her options. Try not to push or rush her. She may be able to decide immediately, or she may want to go home and think about it.

Job Value
Clarification Guide

Code: For Values	
Important (must have)	I
Desirable (if possible)	D
Makes no difference	N

Job Value Clarification	Present Needs and Considerations	Job A Type of Job	Job B Type of Job
The Work Itself			
People You Work With			
Advancement Opportunities			
Salary			
Location of Work			
Education & Training Opportunities			
Self-Satisfaction			
Benefits			
Supervisor			
Work Hours			
Title of Job			
Status of Job			
Opinions Others Have of Job			
Working Conditions			
Additional Ideas of Registrant:			

"When I first started working, I had some feelings of insecurity. I didn't know if I was working fast enough, or if I was doing everything right. But after a while I started getting very good feedback. After three months I got a raise. I knew then that my supervisor was happy with my work, and that really increased my self-confidence and self-esteem."

Step Four: Help Client Prepare for and Obtain a Non-Traditional Job

Once your client has decided to try a non-traditional job, she may need assistance in:

Choosing a field (see the chapter, "Choosing a Non-Traditional Job")

Finding a training program or job (see the chapters, "Getting Trained" and "Getting a Non-Traditional Job")

Obtaining supportive services, including day care (see the chapter, "Working and Welfare")

Preparing for the interview (see the chapter, "Getting a Non-Traditional Job")

Clients may also have fears of entering a non-traditional job, which they have difficulty articulating. A client may be afraid that she will not be able to get a non-traditional job; that she will be the only woman on the job; that she will not be able to learn the skills; that she will not be strong enough; or that she will not be accepted by co-workers, family, and friends. To help a client overcome her fears, you should first acknowledge that her fears are understandable and valid. Then try to provide some positive reinforcement which will reduce the fear. Try to help your client view her fear as something she is willing to overcome. Some clients do not have these fears. As long as you feel your client has had the opportunity to voice any fears, you need not bring them up.

Working with Employers

Most employers have never considered women for certain kinds of jobs. For this reason, you may want to develop a special strategy for working with employers to place women in non-traditional jobs. This strategy can include: deciding which companies to approach; learning how to approach them and how to handle their doubts; and advising the employer on how to help a woman stay on the job.

Choosing Companies

Finding the right companies to approach can save you a great deal of time and energy. Try to select companies which fit the following criteria:

The company or industry is growing fast and is expected to increase its labor force. A growth spurt provides an optimal situation for placing women into non-traditional positions. Use your energy where there is the greatest likelihood for results! You can find information on expanding companies and industries in government publications (local labor projections), and in the financial pages of the newspaper.

The company has already worked with your agency. If the company and your agency already have a good relationship, you may have an easier time asking the employer to consider women in non-traditional jobs. Otherwise you must first sell your agency, and then the idea of women in non-traditional jobs.

The company is serious about Affirmative Action. The company should have a written Affirmative Action plan with specific plans and timetables for bringing women into areas where they are currently underrepresented. You are probably wasting your time if the company has never analyzed where women are not working in the company, and has not established realistic goals for addressing this situation.

Approaching the Employer

You can present a specific candidate for an opening, or you may prefer to have a general discussion on the employer's previous experiences (if any) in hiring women for non-traditional jobs. Try to ascertain how aware the employer is of equal employment opportunities laws and assess the employer's commitment to hiring and promoting women. Be aware, too, whether the individual you are dealing with ob-

jects personally to placing women in non-traditional jobs. If this is the case, you may need to point this out.

Approach the employer directly and positively. Point out that there are women interested in and qualified for these jobs. Note you are helping to tap a new pool of candidates for employment, and with more candidates to choose from, the employer is more likely to locate the best employees. You should emphasize the need for a fair and unbiased interview by the employer, and afterwards an honest appraisal of the client's qualifications and experience.

Be prepared to deal with the employer's doubts about the likelihood of success in placing a woman in a non-traditional job. (See the chapter, "Getting a Non-Traditional Job," for a list of possible employer objections and some counter-arguments.) Encourage the employer to look at each individual applicant outside the context of such stereotypes.

Advising the Employer

An employer should not think everything is done once a woman has been hired for a non-traditional job. Because non-traditional jobs are new for both the woman and her co-workers, point out that some additional attention may be needed to ensure she has every chance for success.

When the employer is considering hiring a particular candidate, encourage her or him to make sure the applicant is fully aware of the details of the job. A visit to the work place and an opportunity to talk with other workers about the job (particularly women with that job) will help the applicant have an accurate perception of the job. If the work is physically demanding, the employer should make sure the woman is in good physical shape, or give her time to get in shape before she begins the job.

Urge the employer to treat this woman in the same way as a new man on the job. She should get neither better nor worse treatment than a man. Some women in non-traditional jobs have not been allowed to do the very heavy or dirty parts of the job because of male chivalry. Other women in non-traditional jobs have been asked to do only the heaviest and dirtiest tasks as a way to test them. The employer should make sure that the woman's supervisor treats her fairly, and gives her adequate training and guidance.

Hiring more than one woman at a time in non-traditional jobs increases the likelihood of success. When two or three women are working in the same company (even in different divisions) they will feel less isolated and share the attention of their co-workers. They can also eat lunch together, compare notes, and support each other.

An employer should be prepared for some women not to work out successfully, just as some men do not work out successfully. Encourage the employer to anticipate some attrition and not to generalize about all women from limited experience.

Additional Reading

The following books can give you more information about some topics covered in this guide. Check the public library or local bookstores. Most of these books are available in paperback.

Curtis, Jean. *A Guide for Working Mothers.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976.
Discussion of the issues and practical problems a mother faces in going to work.

Howe, Louise Kapp. *Pink Collar Workers: Inside the World of Women's Work.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977.
An inside look at traditional women's work from interviews with beauticians, sales workers, waitresses, secretaries, and homemakers.

Hope, Karol, and Young, Nancy, eds. *Momma: The Sourcebook for Single Mothers.* New York: New American Library, 1976.
Personal accounts on the experience of being a single mother. Some topics are welfare, childrearing, divorce, and career plans. One article discusses apprenticeship in the skilled trades for women; another is the story of a woman truckdriver. Highly recommended.

Medsger, Betty. *Women at Work.* New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1975.
Photographs of women in traditional and non-traditional jobs, taken by the author on a trip around the U.S. Short quotes from workers describe their feelings about their jobs.

Milwaukee County Welfare Rights Organization. *Welfare Mothers Speak Out: We Ain't Gonna Shuffle Anymore.* New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1972.
Stories by welfare recipients about their experiences with the welfare system, and factual information about the welfare system and the rights of welfare recipients.

Ross, Susan C. *The Rights of Women: The Basic ACLU Guide to a Woman's Rights.* New York: Avon Books, 1973.
A clear and easy-to-read guide to women's rights in employment, education, marriage, and banking, with an emphasis on what to do about sex discrimination.

Scholz, Nelle Tumlin; Prince, Judith Sosebee; and Miller, Gordon Poster. *How to Decide: A Workbook for Women.* New York: Avon Books, 1978.
A guide for career and life planning. Numerous exercises help the reader evaluate her work experiences, interests, and career goals. Highly recommended.

Terkel, Studs. *Working.* New York: Avon, 1974.
People in many different jobs talk about themselves and their jobs. Entertaining.

Wetherby, Terry, ed. *Conversations: Working Women Talk About Doing a "Man's Job."* Millbrae, Cal.: Les Femmes Publishing, 1977.
Twenty-two interviews with women who work in non-traditional fields—how they broke in, what they do, and how they feel about their work. A truckdriver, a stuntswoman, a bank president, a welder, and an electrician are included. Highly recommended.

Women's Enterprises of Boston

739 Boylston St.
Boston, MA 02116 266-2243

A non-profit organization founded in 1975 to help women enter non-traditional jobs in skilled and technical fields.

Services:

- technical career library
- vocational counseling
- support groups for unemployed women
- education and training information
- loan fund to help women meet job-related needs, such as equipment or tools

Free training programs:

- electro-mechanical (depending on funding)
- energy conservation (depending on funding)
- summer program for teenage women